



Brandell e-Scr@pbook

A monthly report on our life in Vanuatu



There was a lot going on around here in November. We are glad to have another opportunity to share some of these things with you. We are grateful for your continued support, and thank God for your faithfulness.

In this month's issue...

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WELCOME TO VANUATU

We were richly blessed by a visit from some dear brothers and a sister from Denver, CO. Mike Ewing (who serves as an elder for the Columbine congregation) and George & Brenda Robison (George preaches for the Columbine congregation) were with us for a full 10 days. Mike Ewing stayed with Mike Olson, and the Robisons slept at the Baker's house.



A group shot taken at Eton Beach, during our round-island drive.

Mike Olson and George made a three-day trip to Santo Island, where George did some teaching back in 1999. They were able to visit several of the Christians there, and tried to encourage them to be faithful.

From the home-front...

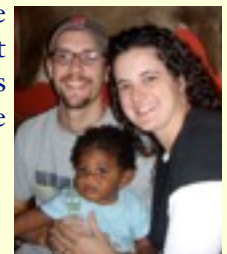
Whew...it's hot! We have had a few days where it's not too bad...but they are usually followed by rain, which brings humidity, which makes it a little like a sauna (heat rising from the streets and everything)! Needless to say, we have a fan going at all times!

We enjoyed having the Columbine group stay with us. It was so nice to have Brenda to talk with personally and to encourage the ladies here in Vila. She presented a great lesson at a ladies fellowship and then taught them how to make cookies. All of the women loved it!

I can't believe our baby is a year old! He's grown so much and is such a blessing to us! He got his first haircut this month. He wasn't too crazy about the clippers and having to hold his head still, but I think he's enjoying the relief of that extra hair being gone (it was really hot).

I had another ultrasound this month. It was so neat to see the baby again. The doctor says that everything looks great. Please keep praying.

We love you
- Shawnda





Mike Ewing and I were scheduled to make a short trip to Emao Island while Mike and George were in Santo, but that trip was canceled at the last minute by the brethren there. Instead, we enjoyed lots of visiting and spent a few hours working on the Vila church building. Shawnda and Brenda spent most of their time together, and I know Shawnda really appreciated having Brenda to talk to. They conducted a ladies' day on Saturday, which culminated in Brenda and Shawnda teaching the ladies how to make cookies.



As a group, we studied with the Etas congregation twice, worshiped with the Vila congregation, visited several Christians during our round-island trip, and passed out 400+ introductory Bible Correspondence Course lessons in the park. Everyone also enjoyed a trip to the Mele Cascade Waterfalls. It seemed that everyone involved in the trip (locals, missionaries and visitors) was encouraged by our time together.

OUR LITTLE GUY IS ONE YEAR OLD!



We were excited to celebrate Titus' first birthday on November 24. It is hard to believe that a year has already passed, and how things have changed in those 12 months.



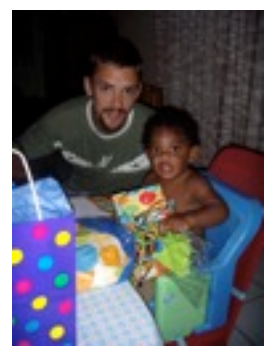
One of Titus' favorite outings is going to the beach (he LOVES playing in the water). When we woke up on Saturday morning, it was raining, and we decided we weren't going to get to go to the beach that day. But, after lunch the sun peeked through the clouds momentarily, so we were off. We got sprinkled on a time or two, but still had lots of fun.

After an hour or so at the beach, we returned home and rested. Uncle Mike joined us for dinner...hamburgers and watermelon. Next it was time for cake and ice cream, and Titus got to feed himself. This was his first real experience with cake, and he loved it. He even licked the icing off his tray when his cake was gone!



Titus enjoyed opening his presents, and even had a chance to play with some of his new toys before it was bedtime. Quite an exciting day!

We appreciate the many prayers that have been made on behalf of Titus during his first year, especially during his hospital stay and the adoption process. We are eagerly looking forward to another great year, as Titus gets to try his hand at being a big brother!





MISSION WORK UPDATES

Our summer months (November-February) tend to be a little slow work-wise, because of the high temperatures and holiday festivities. Kids are out for their summer holiday during December and January. Many locals return to their home villages to celebrate Christmas with their families. Nonetheless, we were able to accomplish several things this month.



As I mentioned last week, we three Brandells travel to Etas every other Wednesday evening to teach and encourage the brethren there. This is always an encouraging time. This month, I taught from the book of Philemon. I believe it is beneficial for relatively new Christians learn how to study through an entire book, and of course the length of Philemon makes it an obvious first choice. We looked at the book verse-by-verse, and then considered three themes: repentance, forgiveness, and providence. The locals really seemed to appreciate the study. The Etas congregation also asked that I come and preach on the third Sunday of the month. I preached a lesson from James 2:14-26. These Christians continue to grow and mature at an encouraging pace, and it is

always a joy to be with them.

We continue to work on the church building here in Port Vila, and believe it or not we are getting very close to finishing! A few more finishing touches next month and the building should be complete. The Vila congregation continues to progress fairly well. Work "in town" continues to be more difficult than village work in many ways. Simply put, there are significantly more distractions in town, which serve to pull people strongly back to the world. We are blessed to have a faithful core of brethren who continue to mature and want to be Christ-like. During this month's mens' meeting, we communicated our desire to make 2008 "yia blong pasem toj" (Year of Passing the Torch). The idea is to really focus on equipping and allowing the local men to take over as many responsibilities as possible. They are excited about this challenge, and the men subsequently called a private meeting (no missionaries) of the whole congregation to discuss how they can accomplish this worthy goal. We are excited about the challenge that lies ahead. Please be praying that this effort will be successful, and that the locals will have the faith to take on the work.



I also visited Epau Village on the last Sunday of the month. Shawnda and Titus are no longer able to accompany me on that trip, because the roads are too much for Shawnda's pregnant belly to handle (they're almost too much for my belly to handle!). I preached a lesson from James 3:1-12, emphasizing the importance of taming our tongue. Much like in the first century, gossip is a big problem in the villages of Vanuatu, because it is often times the only form of entertainment available. We shared a meal after worship, and then I studied privately with a few brethren who had some questions. The congregation has asked me to return on Sunday, December 23 to preach, and to celebrate Christmas with them that afternoon.





NEW SISTER



You may recall us introducing you to Carol in last month's e-Scrapbook. We are happy to announce that she made the decision to obey the gospel this month. Claude baptized her



into Christ on November 21. Please be praying for Carol's new walk. She is especially hopeful that she will be able to win her husband. Mike and Shawnda continue to study with her each Tuesday morning.

PHOTOS FROM THE MONTH

